

## ADAPTING OFFICER EDUCATION TO SUPPORT COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE

BY

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# USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

## **ADAPTING OFFICER EDUCATION TO SUPPORT COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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Counterinsurgency is the emerging theory of war in the 21st Century. Given the new nature of war, the Army must adapt its officer entry level education system. In order to achieve the mental agility required of our junior leaders, we need to restructure entry level schooling to fight and win in this unconventional environment.

## ADAPTING OFFICER EDUCATION TO SUPPORT COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE

So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

—President George W. Bush

Given our nation's policy in the very recent past, we are and for the foreseeable future engaged in conflict in the name of supporting democracy in addition to the protection of our nation and its interests. However, the comfortable familiarity of conventional warfare between established countries or state actors with powerful militaries will not dictate the way the U.S. Army will fight its wars in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The theory of war for the 21<sup>st</sup> is the counterinsurgency emerging from weak states where an insurgency is the only path to victory against U.S. military strength.

Since 1945, the great powers have primarily responded to the problem of war in and between weak states. They have not themselves been the sources of war, as they had been between the seventeenth century and 1945. To study war, then, the new focus will have to be on states other than the "powers."<sup>1</sup>

This is not to suggest the United States will never fight a conventional style war again. In fact there are several examples of conflict which will require an initial phase of conventional force on force warfare tactics and operations. There is no army capable of standing up to the U.S. military in a conventional fight, but what follows will certainly be an insurgent effort to win the conflict and break the will of the United States military and the American public.

In order for the United States to fight and win an effective counterinsurgency, the Army must become more flexible, agile and an adaptable organization capable of grasping and applying the complexities of a counterinsurgent fight. There is no doubt

the American Army and its leaders are the most adaptive and flexible in the world, but in order to always be prepared to win against an insurgency leaders must be armed with the most up to date training and education available. The counterinsurgency will not go away. We must train and adapt the officer corps with the knowledge to fight and win the wars of the 21<sup>st</sup> century...the counterinsurgency.

In order to show why Army education must change, this paper will address the meaning of an insurgency and the components of the insurgency that make it effective. Along with demonstrating the effectiveness of an insurgent strategy against the United States, this paper will address the components of a counterinsurgency that enable it to win.

The second goal of this paper will address the entry-level U.S. Army officer education system and proposals to alter the system in order to provide the young leaders of the force with the tools necessary to fight and win in the counterinsurgent role. Given the nature of counterinsurgent warfare, the Army's junior officer corps is being required to perform a myriad of tactical tasks. Tasks such as using money as a weapon system (MAAWS), meeting with and establishing relationships with local populace leaders, re-establishing essential services, training host nation security forces and opening or re-opening small businesses all require specialized training. All these tasks go beyond traditional tactical tasks. The Army's entry-level education system sparsely trains junior officers on the above non-standard (yet critical) tasks if at all.

The second point of entry-level training involves combat arms officers. Currently the junior officers in the tactical counterinsurgent environment are exercising tactical tasks never addressed in a "stove pipe" basic course on a daily basis. Tactical missions

such as patrolling, IED awareness, room clearance, search and seizure, raids, tactical questioning, and combat in an urban environment are not resident to an armor or artillery officer. Yet armor and artillery officers are assigned to combined arms battalions (CABs) and expected to lead soldiers to safe mission accomplishment. Likewise, infantry officers are currently assigned to armor or artillery formations and expected to perform regardless of basic branch.

What is suggested in this project is that the Army's combined arms junior leaders need to be multi-functional. Multi-functional junior leaders are not only necessary to lead and fight in a counterinsurgency, but become particularly critical as junior leaders advance in rank and become commanding officers in multi-functional combat units such as combined arms battalions and brigade combat teams. Addressing this shortfall can be accomplished by creating a "combined arms officer" during phase III of BOLC. This paper demonstrates the Army must address these entry level training shortfalls during Phases II and III of BOLC.

Additionally, the preparation and sustainment education of junior leaders must encompass cultural and language training in order to understand the environment of adversaries and the population indigenous to the region. If the U.S. is to win a counterinsurgent fight by winning the hearts and minds of the population, U.S. officers must have a firm grasp and understanding of the culture and cultural familiarity in turn, can lead to sympathy and understanding of the problems and issues that are important to the local population.

#### Components of an Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

The conventional theories of war have changed. The theory of counterinsurgency warfare is the how strategic leaders must think and apply problem-



solving strategy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is not a sudden change or a new development in warfare. The necessity for counterinsurgency tactics or doctrine originates with the onset of an insurgent force.

Clausewitz describes the earliest insurgencies as a revolution or general uprising. "Militia and bands of armed civilians cannot and should not be employed against the main enemy force-or indeed against any sizable enemy force. They are not supposed to pulverize the core but to nibble at the shell and around the edges."<sup>2</sup> The world has seen insurgencies throughout numerous conflicts. America has most recently and notably been forced to conduct counterinsurgent operations in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Given Clausewitz's ability to identify and define an insurgency during the period of his experience and writings, the idea of counterinsurgency as a "stand alone" theory of war is reasonable and arguably long overdue. The opening argument for today's nature of war described by U.S. Joint Forces Command states:

The tension between rational political calculations of power on one hand and secular or religious ideologies on the other, combined with the impact of passion and chance, makes the trajectory of any conflict difficult if not impossible to predict. In coming decades, Americans must struggle to resist judging the world as if it operated along the same principles and values that drive our own country.<sup>3</sup>

The U.S. basically classifies warfare in two categories: conventional and unconventional. Conventional warfare is defined as a form of warfare conducted by using conventional military weapons and battlefield tactics between two or more states in open confrontation – regular armies centrally organized and directed by a hierarchy. The forces on each side are well-defined, and fight using weapons that primarily target the opposing army. During the past two decades, the Army created doctrine, tactics,

techniques and procedures and trained its forces, both at home station and the Combat Training Centers to fight and win in such wars. Only recently (the past four to five years) the Army drastically altered its doctrine and training to include fighting an insurgency as a counterinsurgent force. Although the army paid lip service to fighting a counterinsurgency in Vietnam, Andrew Krepinevich points to the fact the war was waged as a conventional fight.

The general (Westmoreland) conceded that 'unlike the guerrillas, if we avoided battle, we could never succeed.' Yet the guerrillas avoided battle and drew the Americans away from the population. As Westmoreland later admitted, "From the first the primary emphasis of the North Vietnamese focused on the Central Highlands and the central coastal provinces, with the basic end of drawing American units into remote areas and thereby facilitating control of the population in the lowlands.' By focusing on population control, Westmoreland might have forced the guerrillas to come to him. As thing turned out, the Army would neither secure the population nor get its decisive battles with the insurgents.<sup>4</sup>

Reinforcing Krepinevich's analysis, Steven Metz notes: "After the cold war, the military assumed that it would not undertake protracted counterinsurgency and did little to develop its capabilities for this type of conflict. Iraq was a case in point. It has forced the U.S. military to relearn counterinsurgency on the fly."<sup>5</sup>

Unconventional warfare is quite a contrast to conventional warfare. For example, forces or objectives are covert or not well-defined, tactics and weapons intensify environments of subversion or intimidation, and the general or long-term goals are coercive or subversive to a political body. The essence of unconventional warfare is the insurgency. David Galula defines insurgency as: "a protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order."<sup>6</sup>

Clausewitz displays a remarkable understanding of an insurgency, especially considering the fact that the phenomenon was new in his day. In his description, he equates a band of armed peasants with those of an insurgency, but the tactics remain the same. He writes:

a platoon of soldiers will cling together like a herd of cattle and generally follow their noses: peasants, on the other hand, will scatter and vanish in all directions, without requiring a special plan. This explains the highly dangerous character that a march through mountains, forests, or other types of difficult country can assume for a small detachment: at any moment the march may turn into a fight. The only answer to militia actions is the sending out of frequent escorts as protection for convoys, and as guards on all stopping places, bridges, defiles, and the rest.<sup>7</sup>

This is exactly what the United States is facing today in Iraq and Afghanistan and had faced during the Vietnam War.

Without question the US forces fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan are forced, out of self-preservation, to provide constant and targeted security against insurgent attack without warning. To cope with the challenge, the U.S. developed entire task forces and spent enormous amounts of money toward this effort. An example is the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Task Force. The entire development and mission of the task force is geared to defeating the threat of IEDs against coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The focus of their effort is identifying likely avenues for emplacement, patterns, assembly rings, financial support rings, triggering devices, and reactive measures for surviving an IED blast.

In order to defeat an insurgency we have to understand the nature of the insurgency. The objective of the insurgency is winning the support of the population.

Afflicted with his congenital weakness, the insurgent would be foolish if he mustered whatever forces were available to him and attacked his opponent in a conventional fashion. Logic forces him instead to carry the fight to a different ground where he has a better chance to balance the

physical odds against him. The population represents this new ground. If the insurgent manages to dissociate the population from the counterinsurgent or the government, to control it physically, to get its active support, he will win the war.<sup>8</sup>

We can illustrate this feature with an example drawn from Iraq. In Iraq, the insurgents controlled the population. During un-conventional conflict in Baghdad in March 2008-March 2009, there were two main insurgent groups: Shia criminals or extremists, to include Sadr's militia and Sunni criminals, which included remaining elements of Al Qaeda (AQI).

Both the Shia and Sunni criminals controlled the population in the same basic way. They offered what amounted to mob style protection. They controlled the resources essential to the neighborhoods like propane for heating and cooking. They used force, violence and intimidation. They were masters of exploiting the media to display harmful messages to the local population and the citizens of the United States. As David Galula points out: "The asymmetrical situation has important effects on propaganda. The insurgent, having no responsibility, is free to use every trick; if necessary, he can lie, cheat, exaggerate."<sup>9</sup> The root of insurgent control in any situation is the lack of rule with the first rule being: there are no rules. Insurgent practices are particularly difficult for United States forces (or any country that follows the laws of armed conflict) because it abides by the moral and ethical guidelines set forth in the laws of armed conflict.

Another fundamental problem for the United States is its belief that all cultures in the world have (or at least should have) the same values as our own, in particular the value of human life. As expressed in *The Joint Operating Environment 2008*:

*Challenges and Implications for the Joint Force:*

In many parts of the world, there are no rational actors, at least in our terms. Against enemies capable of mobilizing large numbers of young men and women to slaughter civilian populations with machetes or to act as suicide bombers in open markets; enemies eager to die, for radical ideological, religious, or ethnic fervor; there is little room for negotiations or compromise.

An understanding of this aspect of the challenge is essential to regaining the support of the population and defeat of an insurgency.

Victory in counterinsurgency warfare is dependent on the favor and loyalty of the population. "A victory is not the destruction in a given area of the insurgent's forces and his political organization. A victory is that plus the permanent isolation of the insurgent from the population, isolation not enforced upon the population but maintained by and with the population."<sup>10</sup>

Mao Tse-Tung understood this main element to counterinsurgent victory over the insurgent. His writings on Guerrilla Warfare in 1936 are what U.S. forces practice today and are what is proving successful in Iraq. Mao's doctrine states: "it was essential that the army, without an established government to provide logistical support, retain the goodwill of the people in order to ensure its own survival." He developed a code known as "The Three Rules and the Eight Remarks" which guided his army and which subsequently guide (basically) elements or of our army's rules of engagement today:<sup>11</sup>

- Rules:
  - All actions are subject to command.
  - Do not steal from the people.
  - Be neither selfish nor unjust.

- Remarks:
  - Replace the door when you leave the house.
  - Roll up the bedding on which you have slept.
  - Be courteous.
  - Be honest in your transactions.
  - Return what you borrow.
  - Replace what you break.
  - Do not bathe in the presence of women.
  - Do not without authority search those you arrest.

In Iraq there are numerous examples of practices that resemble Mao's instruction. One must have a clear understanding of how missions to secure the confidence of the people and drive a wedge between them and the insurgency can be conducted. A thorough knowledge of and respect for the culture of the people you are trying to secure is the first step. The mission of re-establishing and re-vitalizing basic essential services such as sewer systems, road improvement, electricity, fresh water, garbage collection, markets and businesses, was of equal or greater importance to the tactical mission of seeking and destroying the enemy.

Likewise, U.S. forces established a working relationship with the Iraqi Security Forces to conduct combined missions to capture insurgents. Establishing the relationship gave legitimacy to U.S. missions – not just the Americans idea, and gained the people's confidence in their security from their own police. U.S. forces worked very hard to respect the population's property. If a U.S. or coalition soldier broke something and hurt someone, they always fixed it or paid for it and this was called condolence

payments. Ultimately as such policies became wide spread, the U.S. received more and more tips on enemy activity. There was also a dramatic drop in the amount of insurgent forces occupying the neighborhoods in many districts because they no longer felt secure to engage in criminal activity.

What is working in Iraq is what is shaping the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commander's guidance. General Stanley A. McChrystal's guidance is currently: "Protecting the people is the mission. The conflict will be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy. ISAF will succeed when the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) earns the support of the people."<sup>12</sup> Throughout his guidance General McChrystal delivers several directives concerning winning the support of the Afghan population. The bottom line in his guidance is "changing our mindset... An effective "offensive" operation in counterinsurgency, therefore, is one that takes from the insurgent what he cannot afford to lose – control of the population."<sup>13</sup>

Even though there is still a necessity for the U.S. military to maintain large conventional formations capable of winning conventional battles, there will surely be a counterinsurgent effort after victory. There is no doubt that all states watching American operations on the "stage" of war, are learning and adapting. They understand that to win against the United States, an insurgent force provides a far greater chance for success.

The United States was not prepared to mount a rapid, holistic, and effective counterinsurgency campaign, but also was unwilling to write Iraq off before being drawn deep into counterinsurgency. This gave the Iraqi Insurgents and, more importantly, other enemies of the United States the impression that insurgency can work. This is likely to happen again. By failing to prepare for counterinsurgency in Iraq and by failing to avoid it, the United States has increased the chances of facing it again in the near future.<sup>14</sup>

## Entry Level Officer Education

The United States Military cannot continue to train and educate its leaders and soldiers exclusively to fight conventional style warfare. It is clear that the emerging nature of warfare is geared to a small unit fight within an asymmetric construct. The construct may be in the form of guerrilla warfare, war against non-state actors such as terrorists, or popular uprisings. In any event, they all seem to share several of the characteristics and goals of an insurgency.

The Iraq War can be viewed as two wars. The first war, the one the US military planned for months aimed at removing Saddam's regime from power, ended when President Bush announced, "Mission Accomplished." The magnificent performance by US forces was a validation of the American way of war – conventional dominance. The second war is still under way. Unlike its predecessor, it is not a traditional war and is the type of war the US military tried to avoid for years – a counterinsurgency.<sup>15</sup>

The problem facing the U.S. military and U.S. policy to stop aggression is now two-fold: the conventional fight and the counterinsurgent fight. The Army conducted significant change in force structure and force capabilities. What the Army lacks is, in ability to adapt to either fight, which requires wholesale cultural change in training and education of the officer corps especially at the level of second Lieutenant. "The recognition of nontraditional threats to American security posed by irregular enemies is by far the most dramatic paradigm shift in US military strategy. Whereas the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) acknowledged the possibilities of "less contingencies" its force-planning construct remained focused on conventional, interstate war associate with major combat operations. The 2005 QDR identifies irregular warfare as "the dominant form of warfare confronting the United States. It requires the service to maintain essential war fighting capabilities but also direct them to place greater



emphasis on meeting irregular challenges such as conducting counterinsurgency and stability operations.”<sup>16</sup>

Counterinsurgency as an emerging theory of warfare certainly holds unique challenges for the officer corps and how we plan, resource and fight, but what also complicates this strategy is the organizational change of force structure at division and brigade. The emphasis is now on the capabilities of the brigade - the concept and implementation of the brigade combat team (BCT). This is clearly a proper response, combining the capability to fight conventionally and wage a counterinsurgency.

The Army is in the midst of its most radical reorganization since World War II. By converting from a division-based structure to one centered on a brigade-sized unit of action that possesses organic combat, combat support, and sustainment capabilities, the Army will have 42 deployable brigade combat teams. In addition to its conversion to a brigade-based force, the Army, recognizing the importance of military police and civil affairs capabilities in stability and counterinsurgency operations, has reorganized excess capability in artillery, engineer, and air defense units to perform those functions so critical in counterinsurgency operations.<sup>17</sup>

A solution to the problems associated with fighting two very different types of war is resident in the BCT structure. As previously stated, the creation of the BCT creates its own challenges, but it creates its own opportunities as well. There are several examples of field artillery Lieutenants serving as infantry platoon leaders. There are several examples of field artillery Captains commanding infantry or armor companies. Even at the highest-ranking positions in a Brigade Combat Team, such as the BCT Operations Officer, Executive Officer, and even the Deputy Commander one finds officers working outside of their prescribed branch of training and experience. The most significant cultural change of leadership within a BCT is the opportunity for a field artillery officer or aviation officer to serve as a maneuver BCT commander. These are the opportunities posed to our officer corps. The challenge facing the technical and

tactical competence of officers today is the lack of formal training and education, which undoubtedly, would enhance the success of leaders serving in critical positions outside their basic branch.

There is no suggestion that officers serving outside their field of expertise or branch cannot be successful. On the contrary, they can be successful because

The peculiar skill of the military officer is the development, operation, and leadership of a human organization—a profession—whose primary expertise is the application of coercive force on behalf of the American people: for the Army officer, such development, operation and leadership occurs incidentally to sustaining America's dominance in land warfare.<sup>18</sup>

These are the qualities of any successful officer. To strengthen that quality requires restructuring the introductory educational system from a more parochial, single branch style system, to a broader based, but equally competent system. The focus will be on the combat arms officer.

Combat Arms consists of several branches. Those branches include infantry, armor, field artillery, aviation, air defense and special forces. Instead of having several branches within combat arms, why not have a single branch – combat arms? The sustainment arm of the Army used to consist of transportation, medical services, ordinance, and the quartermaster corps. They have now been combined into the logistics branch. They are also very successful at leading and commanding at platoon through brigade level, within the logistics arena, no matter what their entry level specialty was. A similar combination would work for combat arms.

To illustrate, let's begin with the Basic Officers Leader Course (BOLC). BOLC is the initial phases of an officer's education. BOLC I trains newly commissioned officers not afforded basic soldier training skills offered in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) or West Point Military Academy. BOLC II focuses on small unit tactics and the

idea that every soldier is a rifleman first. BOLC III then trains an officer in a specialized basic branch, such as the field artillery.

The focus of integrated training as a combined arms officer needs to begin at BOLC II. Currently the design of BOLC II is based on the premise that all new leaders need experience in “warrior tasks and warrior battle drills at the small unit level. The BOLC II phase also encompass lessons learned from the Global War on Terrorism and the Warrior Ethos.”<sup>19</sup> The course is seven weeks long and the curriculum for BOLC II centers around combatives, land navigation, basic rifle marksmanship, forward operating base (FOB) operations, urban operations and a ruck march.

This seems to provide a good overall training base for the combat arms officer. A recommendation for improvement would delete from the current curriculum: basic rifle marksmanship (an officer is trained on this during initial soldier training during ROTC, West Point or BOLC I), FOB operations and the ruck march. In their stead, and potentially adding several more weeks, would be the inclusion of special forces education competencies.

The special forces community also recognizes the need for training change. “During the next two decades, non-state actors, not states, will be the primary security threat to the US and Western allies. Non-state actors such as Al Qaeda, who owe no allegiance to a state and are not bound by national boundaries, are likely to continue to grow in strength and lethality.”<sup>20</sup> Their basic level training, and that which should be added to BOLC II, consists of “training on small unit tactics in unconventional warfare, foreign language and cultural awareness training, leadership in working with indigenous forces, and mission planning and briefing skills.”<sup>21</sup> Following this rigorous training

regimen, and indoctrination and preparation for operations in small units and unconventional warfare, the officer moves to his combat arms training.

BOLC III is the branch specific training lasting anywhere from 5 to 13 weeks. Arguably the most technical of all the combined arms branches is in the field artillery. Following the very broad outline and curriculum proposed for BOLC II will give an officer adequate training in small unit tactics and “every soldier is an infantryman first.” BOLC III can be restructured to include weapon system training and the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) necessary to fight those systems. This education would include the artillery, armor, and mechanized infantry platforms.

Of course, what we have described is only entry level training. Under the Army’s design, intricate level training begins and continues in the unit. This is where the strength of the BCT organization enhances the utility of the education changes described above. Since the BCT commander now owns all the combat arms specialties within his BCT, he now can leverage his own intuition and the expertise within the organization to train and cross train his young officers in the three combat arms competencies of armor, artillery, and infantry. An officer can serve in an armor company for a year or two and then transfer to an artillery battery for a year or so. The officer could conceivably serve in an armor, artillery and infantry battalion thereby making the officer far more flexible and adaptable prior to attending the advance course.

The enemies of the United States understand that victory against us will come in the form of our failure to fight as a counterinsurgency. Our training model must correct this deficiency. It must be reshaped beginning at entry level officer education and of course, continue through the training and experiences over an officer’s entire career. Of

course there are those who think we will create a marginal Army using this basic model. They are the ones resistant to cultural change. To those opposed, Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews offer the following:

To serve American society effectively, strategic leaders of the profession must redefine, prioritize, and delimit the declared expert knowledge of the profession; clarify the jurisdictions with in which this knowledge applies; and then develop professional who are experts in applying this knowledge.<sup>22</sup>

#### Follow-On Officer Education and Training

Entry level education is the first step, but most indispensable for creating the officer corps of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is extremely important, but equally important is the reinforcement of training and enhancement of training necessary to create a force of leaders capable of a thorough understanding of the culture and the population of the region of conflict.

As noted above, in order to win a counterinsurgency one must win the hearts and minds of the population. We must accomplish this task if we ever hope to separate the insurgent from the population by instilling trust and confidence of the people with American forces and their efforts to help them regain their nation. The training that can ensure competence in this effort can be broken into what exists today and the cultural change in our officers' continuing education.

The training existing today consists of home station training and the realistic training offered at the Army's Combat Training Centers (CTCs). The Army has made great strides in changing in culture with the advent of its training effort to include cultural training at its CTCs. Here, the young platoon leaders and company commanders have the opportunity for introduction into the culture of the region they will deploy to.

At the National Training Center (NTC) for example, the paradigm has shifted away from the conventional fight. In the past these training rotations were strictly conventional in nature. The training focused on force-on-force battles between a U.S. Army Brigade Combat Team and the Opposing Forces stationed at the NTC. The training rotation lasted two weeks in the wartime environment and consisted of an offensive fight, a defensive fight, and a live fire defensive fight. The rotational Brigade Combat Team returned from this training well trained and prepared to defeat any adversary in a conventional battle. As stated, the paradigm changed.

Following the identification of a counterinsurgent fight in Iraq, the National Training Center's training shifted to an asymmetric warfare type of experience. The concept was the defeat of an insurgent force and protection from the deadly tactics employed by an insurgency. This training consisted of living, operating and securing a forward operating base (FOB), recognizing and defeating the improvised explosive device (IED) threat, dealing with an indigenous population, meeting with and working with local government, training and working in coordination with indigenous security forces and using money as a weapons system (MAWS). This proves to be very good training prior to deployment to a theater of conflict such as Iraq or Afghanistan. The problem with this was that it discounted any training in conventional warfare.

Today's NTC is a combination of conventional style training and training designed to fight and win against an insurgency. The effectiveness of this approach continues to be evaluated, but is certainly a step in the right direction. The U.S. officer corps is more prepared and more confident in dealing with the always changing environment of asymmetric warfare. Despite improvements, the changes are not

enough. We must create an officer who is completely immersed and indoctrinated in a particular culture – one that is relevant to potential future conflict. The manner of training to enhance an officer's career and to ultimately enhance the combat force is through education in language and culture during an officer's fifth through eighth year of service.

The problem currently is a typical officer serves close to a year in entry level education as discussed previously. The officer serves about four to five years in a combat unit leading soldiers followed by attendance at the officers particular advance course. What happens following the advance course is where the intensive language and cultural training must occur. Those that oppose this approach maintain that there is not enough time in an officer's career to allow this type training.

It is no secret that the number of young officers departing the Army following their initial contracted tour of service is very high. High rates of attrition occur for several reasons, but the operational tempo and number of deployments is the primary cause. Consequently, the disturbing trend for today's officer is that they are offered, at an extremely high rate, the option for advance civil schooling in a degree of their choosing. This program is offered as an incentive to maintain the best and brightest officers in the Army. This program takes the officer out of the mainstream Army for two years. These are the two years where cultural immersion can fit.

The Army must make the tough decision to strengthen its force and the competence of its young leaders by enforcing education that benefits the Army and the individual. The answer is use this two year education period for language and cultural training.

To implement this solution one must first identify of the Army's best and brightest officers. This is easy to accomplish because the Army has a system of promotion "below the zone" or early. This is when an officer is promoted to the next grade of rank a year earlier than his or her cohort's year group. Once an officer is identified as a candidate for early promotion they are selected for language and cultural training which would be determined by the needs of the Army.

Cultural training or immersion would consist of one year of language training at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. This language training will be specified as Arabic, Hindi, Chinese or Korean because those languages parallel current areas of instability or potential instability. Following this language training, we must require the officer to serve in the cultural environment which supports and advances the language training. For example, the officer may serve in an embassy in the Middle East or South Korea. What is critical is the officer's immersion into the culture supporting their language training. More importantly, living and moving among the people enables the officer to understand their habits, religion, food, economy, rituals, practices, laws and government.

These two years of language and cultural training will produce senior captains and young majors capable of leading soldiers and advising commanders on best practices to serve the population and be sensitive to local culture that will ultimately separate the population from an insurgency. Today's Army currently has the Foreign Area Officer (FAO) career field where this training already exists. The weakness however, is that it exists for too few officers selected to serve as a FAO. FAOs serve at the highest, and arguably, the most out of reach commands of the Army. They are not



assigned to divisions or brigade combat teams where they are desperately needed.

The change in education – the paradigm shift in education – described above will provide several of these cultural experts at every level of command from the battalion through the corps.

Yes, the nature of warfare has changed. The theory of warfare most suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is counterinsurgency. The U.S. Army cannot continue its path of half-hearted training and education to support this new theory of war. The consequences for the over emphasis on conventional training and education will only doom the military to continued failure and the necessity to conduct ad-hoc training and education to adapt to asymmetric warfare in a reactive manner. The U.S. Army must make bold and rapid changes in its entry level and continuing education systems if its officers are expected to lead our nation's soldiers to victory in the next conflict. As stated by former Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker, "This is a game of wits and will. You've got to be learning and adapting constantly to survive."

## Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War* (First Paperback printing, 1989), 480-481

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<sup>4</sup> Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam*, (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 167

<sup>5</sup> Steven Metz, *Learning From Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy*, (U.S. Army War College January 2007), v

<sup>6</sup> David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice* (Greenwood Press, 1964), 4

<sup>7</sup> Clausewitz, *On War*, 481

<sup>8</sup> Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, 7-8

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, 14

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, 77

<sup>11</sup> John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons From Malaya and Vietnam. Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife*, (Praeger Publishers, 2002), 22

<sup>12</sup> Commander International Security Assistance Force/United States Forces – Afghanistan General Stanley A. McChrystal, “COMISAF/USFOR-A Counterinsurgency (COIN) Training Guidance,” memorandum for Whom it May Concern, Kabul, Afghanistan, 10 November 2009, 1

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 3

<sup>14</sup> Metz, *Learning From Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy*, 86-87

<sup>15</sup> Michael R. Mellillo, “Outfitting a Big-War Military with Small-War Capabilities,” *Parameters*, Autumn 2006, 26

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 27-28

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 30-31

<sup>18</sup> Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews, *The Future of the Army Profession*, (The McGraw –Hill Companies, Inc., 2005), 215

<sup>19</sup> Capt. Robert L. McCormick, “Army Officer Education System Transformation New Basic Officer Leadership Course will change the way the Army and Air Defense Artillery trains newly commissioned ADA Lieutenants,” *Air Defense Artillery*, January-March 2005

<sup>20</sup> Russell D. Howard, *Educating Special Forces Junior Leaders for a Complex Security Environment*, JSOU Report 09-6, July 2009, 8

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 13

<sup>22</sup> Don M. Snider and Lloyd J. Matthews, *The Future of the Army Profession*, 213

